I·C·P·D 94

Newsletter of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, Egypt, 5-13 September 1994

No. 14

April 1994

Third PrepCom Consolidates Broader Approach to Population, Development

STEVE BERMAN/THE EARTH TIMES

PrepCom Chairman Fred Sai addresses 4 April plenary. Also seated (from left): UN Under-Secretary-General Jean-Claude Milleron; ICPD Secretary-General Nafis Sadik; Conference Secretary Peggy Kelly; and ICPD Executive Coordinator Jyoti Shankar Singh.

Nearly all countries now agree that the provision of family planning should be part of a broader approach that aims to meet overall reproductive health care needs, particularly of women. Recognition of this concept was a principal outcome of PrepCom III, the third and final session of the Preparatory Committee for the international Conference on Population and Development, which closed in New York on 22 April.

Among the other major achievements of the momentous three-week session was a strengthened recognition that population concerns must be an indispensable part of national and international efforts to achieve equitable, sustainable development.

Delegations from over 160 countries took part in PrepCom III, which was also attended by an estimated 1,200 representatives from over 500 non-governmental organizations, and was the focus of unprecedented media attention. The central activity was the negotiation of a detailed draft Programme of Action which is to be finalized and adopted in Cairo in September; delegates approved about 85 per cent of the final wording.

The participating Governments agreed on the urgency of empowering women and eliminating all forms of gender bias; on the need to integrate population concerns into all development policies and programmes; and on the importance of basing population programmes on meeting people's needs rather than demographic targets.

Non-governmental organizations were involved in the PrepCom to an unprecedented degree. The draft Programme calls for a partnership of Governments and NGOs in population and development efforts. NGO representatives closely followed the negotiations and used numerous mechanisms to continue to make their views known (in many cases, NGOs were represented on national delegations); a women's caucus was particularly active. The PrepCom approved a list of 937 NGOs for

Continued on page 4

In This Issue

- **News in Brief** *page 2*
- **Population Ethics Principles Proposed** *page 2*
- **Timothy Wirth on Women and Sustainable Development** *page 3*
- **Dr. Sadik's Statement to PrepCom Press Conference** *page 5*
- **NGO Women Speak Out on Reproductive Rights** *page 7*
- **News From NGOs** *page 7*
- **Calendar of Upcoming Events** *page 8*

IN BRIEF

A 30 March conference on Population and Economic Growth: Perspectives from the Global South explored the links between population, economic growth and sustainable development. The meeting, in Washington, D.C., was sponsored by The American University's Center for the Study of the Global South with support from UNFPA.

In a keynote speech, Dr. Nafis Sadik, ICPD Secretary-General, observed, "A quarter century of experience shows that the most effective way to alter population growth and other demographic trends is to invest in people. ... The process should start with meeting present needs — providing modern, safe and effective family planning services to everyone who wants to avoid pregnancy, an estimated 120 million people today."

The participants — diplomats, NGO representatives, professors and students — agreed on 21 recommendations to be presented at PrepCom III. These address such issues as: poverty alleviation; structural adjustment policies; health care, education and economic opportunity for women; resource consumption; and access to family planning programmes.

❖

Parliamentarians from 14 countries in the Asian, African and Latin American/Caribbean regions decided on 6 April to organize a one-day meeting of Parliamentarians, to be known as "Global Forum", in Cairo during ICPD.

The decision, taken during a meeting at UNFPA Headquarters in New York, was the result of an initiative by the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development. A steering committee, comprised of one representative from each region, will prepare for the Cairo meeting. The Asian Forum secretariat based in Tokyo will serve as the steering committee's secretariat.

❖

Australia's Department of Immigration has launched a national essay competition for secondary school students on the issue of world population and development, as a means of promoting awareness of ICPD and population issues. The winner will be flown to Cairo to attend public sessions of the Conference.

❖

To provide input into the ICPD process from the perspective of youth, 68 young people and youth workers from 30 African countries met in Accra, Ghana, from 25-29 March. The Youth Forum '94 on Population and Sustainable Development adopted an Accra Declaration, which was distributed at PrepCom III. The meeting was organized by the Ghanaian Ministry of Youth and Sports and a Ghanaian NGO, Youth for Population Information and Communication.

In a 5 April address to the PrepCom opening plenary, Nelson G. Agemang, president of Youth for Population Information and Communication, presented highlights from the declaration. In Africa, he noted, 55 per cent of the population is below age 25. Young people face s ch problems as changes in family structure, early parenthood, rural-urban migration, unemployment, an increase in sexually transmitted diseases including HIV infection and AIDS, and substance abuse — and are often denied the chance to participate in matters affecting their lives.

The Accra Declaration calls on the international community to actively promote the well-being of youth, particularly the under-privileged; and to recognize their special needs for social support, economic opportunity and access to reproductive health care. It recommends legal action and education campaigns to do away with harmful practices like child marriage and female genital mutilation, and special programmes for young men that focus on the reproductive rights of women, including the right to refuse sexual advances.

Population Ethics Principles Proposed

"Reproductive rights and reproductive health are part of a broader human good that every society should aim to achieve for its members." So declared participants in a Round Table on Ethics, Population and Reproductive Health, held 8-10 March in New York.

Thirty-six ethicists, theologians, women's rights activists, population policy experts, family planning programme directors and human rights advocates took part. The Development Law and Policy Program of Columbia University's Center for Population and Family Health convened the round table, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Dr. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of ICPD and Executive Director of UNFPA, opened the meeting.

The discussions, which revolved around five propositions, were summarized in a Declaration of Ethical Principles. Among the main points:

- Promoting reproductive health and improving conditions for its attainment are an ethical obligation. People should "have the ability to reproduce, to regulate their fertility, and to practice and enjoy sexual relationships"; they should be "the subjects rather than the objects" of reproductive health programmes.
- Benefits and responsibilities related to reproductive decisions must be allocated equitably. No group should be denied services; "meeting the needs of the most vulnerable groups in society" deserves the highest priority.
- Persons must be treated with respect, and individuals' autonomy

Continued on page 6

READEX
FICHE

State Department Leader Describes New U.S. Commitment to Women's Rights

Support for sustainable development — encompassing issues of reproductive health care, women's rights and rapid population growth as well as environmental concerns — constitutes a key pillar of United States' foreign policy in the post-cold war world, U.S. State Department Counselor Timothy Wirth told a UN audience 30 March.

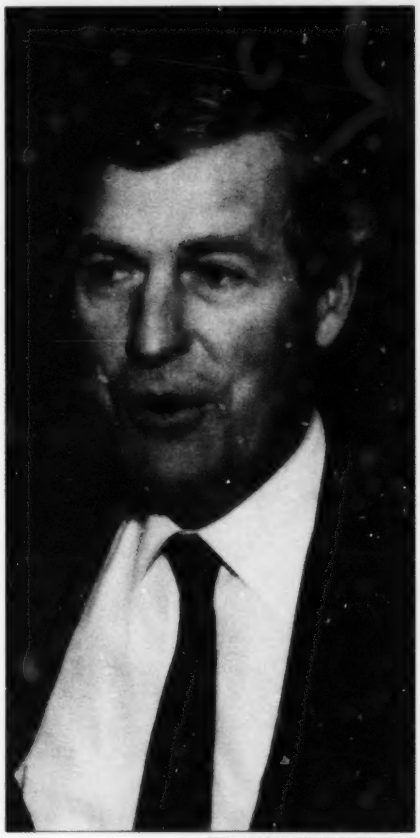
"Women's empowerment, rights and well-being" are central to achieving population and sustainable development goals, and are "top priorities for the Clinton administration", Mr. Wirth declared, in a lecture sponsored by the Earth Pledge Foundation and the Eminent Citizens Committee for Cairo '94.

Mr. Wirth was introduced by UN Under-Secretary-General Nitin Desai. He noted that ICPD, in seeking to balance population with resources, was "a bridge" between the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development and the 1995 World Summit for Social Development.

Discussing his Government's commitment to sustainable development, Mr. Wirth stated, "A set of novel, complex and cross-cutting trends are replacing East-West military confrontation as new determinants of global security." These include: environmental devastation; "inadequate access to maternal health care, contraception and safe abortion"; sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS; and human rights violations.

"Central to all these concerns, in my view," he said, is the spiral of population growth. ... Continued rapid population growth will diminish every hope of social and economic progress in the developing world, every humanitarian endeavour." At the same time, he noted, resource demands by the affluent were depleting timber and water supplies and producing global warming.

"We are only beginning to recognize the extent to which human rights, health, environmental protection, North-South partnership, economic and social progress, are all interrelated determinants of and prerequisites for sustainable development," he said.



ANNA GROSSMAN/THE EARTH TIMES

State Department Counselor Timothy Wirth.

In particular, "sustainable development cannot be realized without the full engagement and complete empowerment of women," Mr. Wirth argued. As barriers to this goal, he cited the lack of primary and reproductive health services, high rates of maternal and child mortality, denial of educational services, under-appreciation of women's potential contribution to environmental goals, and gender bias in political and economic spheres.

He listed several priorities for Cairo: "meeting the unmet demand for and expanding the range of reproductive health services"; "investing in the wisdom of women"; pressing for "respect of the basic human rights of women"; ensuring that "women have necessary economic rights"; adapting population programmes "to address the unique problems faced by adolescent girls"; persuading men "to accept their responsibilities related to fertility"; and involving women "in the design and implementation of sustainable development strategies and programmes."

In support of this agenda, Mr. Wirth noted that the administration of President Bill Clinton hopes to provide nearly $600 million for population activities in 1995.

Following the speech, ICPD Secretary-General Dr. Nafis Sadik hailed the United States' renewed leadership role in the population field, and predicted that its increased funding commitment would have a significant impact on other donors.

'Human rights, health, environmental protection, North-South partnership, economic and social progress, are all... prerequisites for sustainable development.'

At the end of the meeting, Eminent Citizens Committee Chairman Theodore W. Kheel read a letter from Mr. Wirth reporting on his recent visit to Cairo. The letter stressed "the importance that the United States places on the successful completion of the Conference in the city of Cairo." It lauded the Egyptian Government's preparations for ICPD and noted, "Security arrangements are carefully coordinated, with a strong Interior Ministry in charge."

ANNA GROSSMAN/THE EARTH TIMES

Chairman Fred Sai greets PrepCom participant.

STEVE BERMAN/THE EARTH TIMES

At an NGO meeting, jersey promoting male responsibilty is displayed.

PrepCom

Continued from page 1

accreditation to ICPD.

The presence of so many experts and activists in the fields of population, reproductive health, women's rights and the environment also created opportunities for a rich variety of panel discussions, workshops and informal exchanges of information relevant to the many topics being negotiated.

Press interest in the PrepCom was also unusually high. Following her opening day press conference, Dr. Sadik had a number of interviews with television, radio and print journalists, as did Preparatory Committee Chairman Dr. Fred Sai, ICPD Executive Coordinator Jyoti Shankar Singh and other individuals prominent in the ICPD process.

Despite considerable agreement with the draft Programme of Action prepared by the Conference Secretariat, consensus was not reached on a few key issues. The proposal to address unsafe abortion as a major public health concern proved particularly controversial; the Holy See and several countries opposed wording they said might imply endorsement of legalized abortion. Many other delegations supported the approach proposed in the draft document. In the absence of unanimous agreement, references to "reproductive health", "fertility regulation", "family planning" and even "safe motherhood" were put in square brackets, meaning there will be further negotiation on these terms in Cairo.

More discussion will also be required on proposals to offer reproductive health information, counselling and services to adolescents; on a set of 20-year proposed goals in health, education and availability of family planning information and services; and on estimates of the resources needed to provide comprehensive reproductive health services world-wide.

The PrepCom opened in New York on 4 April with statements by the Conference Secretary-General, Dr. Nafis Sadik, and a wide range of government delegations, intergovernmental agencies and non-governmental organizations on their expectations for ICPD and its follow-up. Over 100 speakers addressed the two-and-a-half day opening plenary.

In her remarks introducing the draft, Dr. Sadik highlighted several major themes which flow throughout the document: the critical importance of integrating population concerns into all aspects of development; the centrality of the individual, and recognition of individual rights, needs and responsibilities; concern for the quality of life of all persons throughout their entire life cycle; informed choice, particularly in regard to reproductive health and family planning; and the interdependence of actions at the local, national and international levels.

In view of the limited time available, Dr. Sadik urged delegations to focus on strengthening the draft's specific proposals for action. "The clarity, realism and achievability of these actions are central to the lasting utility of the final document, and to the success of the Conference and its follow-up."

The draft document included detailed cost estimates for proposed population and reproductive health activities, Dr. Sadik noted. "Each of these is backed by very specific data." Cost estimates for other social and economic activities were felt to be unnecessary because they had already been addressed by Agenda 21 and by other international conferences and agencies. She went on to review the draft's various chapters.

In addition to Dr. Sadik, introductory statements were made by Preparatory Committee Chairman Dr. Fred Sai and Jean-Claude Milleron, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis.

In speeches over the next two and a half days, scores of national delegations, NGOs and international agencies outlined their views on the draft Programme of Action and the main issues to be addressed in Cairo. Some delegations spoke on behalf of groups of countries. Algeria, speaking for the Group of 77 and China, for example, called for more emphasis on the alleviation of poverty — a theme repeated by a number of other developing countries. Greece, speaking for the European

Continued on page 6

Dr. Sadik's Remarks at PrepCom Press Conference

ICPD Secretary-General Dr. Nafis Sadik delivered the following remarks at the start of her UN Headquarters press conference on 4 April, opening day of the third session of the Conference Preparatory Committee.

STEVE BERMAN/THE EARTH TIMES

Conference Secretary-General Dr. Nafis Sadik.

The third and final meeting of the Preparatory Committee for ICPD will take place over the next three weeks. This meeting is the culmination of an exhaustive three-year process of regional conferences, national activities, expert group meetings, round tables on a variety of related subjects, and a lot of hard work by Governments and NGOs throughout the world.

We meet at a time when, driven by unprecedented growth in human numbers and wasteful consumption, many of the basic resources upon which future generations will depend for their survival are being depleted, when environmental pollution is intensifying and when widespread poverty and social and economic inequality persists.

However, we also meet during a time of widespread agreement about the importance of population and about the need to focus on the individual and on individual choice as the keystone to balancing population and resources.

There is now an international consensus that we should invest in people, especially in women, and let them make the choices about family size by providing them with high quality family planning programmes. This approach will eliminate hundreds of thousands of maternal deaths each year. At the same time, it will slow the rapid population growth that is making it difficult for many developing countries to provide their growing numbers with food, shelter, employment, education and health.

The efforts of nations and the international community have already met with great success. Average fertility rates in developing countries, where almost all population growth is occurring, have declined from between six to seven children in the 1960s to three to four today. Currently, about 55 per cent of couples and individuals in developing countries use some method of family planning, a nearly five-fold increase since the mid-1960s.

However, there is still much to do. World population today is 5.7 billion. It will reach either 7.27 billion or 7.92 billion by the year 2015, depending on what we do over the next two decades.

The PrepCom has before it a draft Programme of Action that contains a set of 20-year goals in the areas of mortality reduction and universal availability of and accessibility to family planning information and services, and completion of at least primary education, especially for girls. What makes us optimistic about what can be accomplished over the next 20 years are the successes that many countries have made in expanding access to reproductive health care, lowering death rates, providing family planning information services and raising education and income levels, including among women.

However, the full range of modern family planning methods still remains unavailable to at least 350 million couples. Surveys indicate that approximately 120 million additional women would use a modern family planning method if information and services were more available.

Women throughout the world, even in cultures where there are large families, want to have fewer children. Women want high quality reproductive health care which includes not only family planning information and services, but also pre-natal, and post-natal care, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS and referrals for complications. Meeting unmet demand for family planning and providing high quality reproductive care are part of the 20-year goals.

The cost for the proposed population activities is reasonable, considering what is at stake — about $13 billion per year by the year 2000. We estimate that international donors would need to provide about one third of the resources, or $4.4 billion annually by the year 2000, approximately four times the current level of their assistance. The developing countries themselves would continue to be the principal supporters of family planning programmes.

I am encouraged by the recent pledges of Japan and the United States. Japan has pledged $1 billion over the next seven years. The United States, which promises to provide approximately $585 million in 1995, has said it will attempt to bring its commitment up to $1.2 billion annually by the year 2000 and will campaign to encourage other donors to increase their contributions. I am hopeful that as one outcome of the Cairo Conference, other donors will follow the lead of Japan and the United States.

PrepCom

Continued from page 4

Union, called for universal access to good quality reproductive health services, including family planning, and said that population policies should be neither coercive nor discriminatory.

The Committee then quickly got down to the business of considering the draft Programme of Action. The ICPD Secretariat prepared the draft Programme — including 20-year goals, proposed actions, and estimates of resource requirements — based on input from Governments and others at PrepCom II, regional and subregional conferences, the forty-eighth UN General Assembly, meetings of experts, and numerous written submissions.

Most of the negotiation took place in two Working Groups — chaired, respectively, by Ambassadors Nicholaas H. Biegman of the Netherlands and Lionel Alexander Hurst of Antigua and Barbuda. In a "first reading" of the draft Programme, delegations proposed hundreds of amendments in substance or wording of the draft Programme's 14 action-oriented chapters.

The Conference Secretariat then synthesized these proposals in revised drafts of each chapter for further negotiations. These took place mostly in informal but open Working Group sessions; a few closed meetings were held to draft compromise language on various points in the document.

Finally, the chair of each Working Group presented amended versions of each chapter to a two-day plenary which attempted to reach consensus on the wording that remained in brackets.

Chapters 1 and 2 (Preamble and Principles) were considered in a Committee of the Whole. In response to various proposed amendments, revised drafts of these chapters were prepared by the Chairman. Because of time constraints, discussion and approval of the final wording of each were deferred to Cairo; informal consultations will continue in the meantime.

'We have been talking about giving girls a good education, and women better health and real choices. ...Women's reproductive health and adolescent pregnancy are on the table and will have to be dealt with.'

In a 25 April news conference summing up the achievements of PrepCom III, Dr. Sadik stressed, "We have been talking about giving girls a good education, and women better heaith and real choices." She observed that the input of delegations and NGOs had significantly strengthened Chapter 4 on the empowerment of women.

Emphasizing that the overwhelming majority of delegates had accepted a holistic approach to reproductive health care that includes family planning, Dr. Sadik said those suggesting that the World Health Organization's definitions of reproductive health and fertility regulation might include "abortion on demand" were mistaken.

"Neither the United Nations nor the Programme of Action proposes legalizing abortion," she stated. "Rather, the Programme of Action brings to the world's attention the health consequences of unsafe abortion," which causes an estimated 250,000 maternal deaths each year. She said it was likely that compromise language would be developed on abortion prior to ICPD, making it clear that addressing the issue in the reproductive health context must be undertaken within national laws and legislative processes.

"The delegates at Cairo will have a comprehensive and precedent-setting document before them. Women's reproductive health and adolescent pregnancy are on the table and will have to be dealt with," Dr. Sadik declared. "Facing these issues and setting a course of action will include coming to grips with realities long denied." She voiced optimism that the Cairo Conference would adopt the draft Programme of Action with few modifications, and that the final document "will serve as a liberating force for women throughout the world and as one of the cornerstones of the social and economic planning for the 21st century."

Ethics

Continued from page 2

respected. "Women should not be treated as a means for reaching a goal of optimal population." Individuals should "be given a range of alternatives and the right to refuse unwanted family planning methods or medical procedures."

- Reproductive health policies should produce more desirable consequences than undesirable ones. This is not the case, for example, with criminalization of abortion, which results in preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and infertility.
- Population policies are integral parts of social, economic and cultural development, aimed at enhancing people's dignity and quality of life. "Emphasizing population goals in isolation from broader development goals tends to mask the importance of development as the most certain way of eliminating poverty. ... Coercive means to achieve population objectives must be rejected."

To address issues of population and reproductive health ethically, participants concluded, "Governments must devise strategies that are broadly integrated with social and economic development, improved education and political and legal reform. Like other important social goods, reproductive health can only flourish in a climate of respect for human dignity and protection of fundamental human rights."

NGO Women Speak Out for Reproductive Rights

Forcefully condemning "threats to women's reproductive health and rights", 10 women representing a diverse group of international NGOs organized a 6 April press conference to coincide with PrepCom III. In a series of moving, sometimes personal statements, the women described their struggles against "religious fundamentalism" of various kinds and other obstacles to women's empowerment in reproductive matters. At issue was not religion, several stressed, but political power.

ANNA GROSSMAN/THE EARTH TIMES

Luz Alvarez Martinez of the National Latina Health Organization.

"We view with alarm current attempts to weaken references [in the ICPD draft Programme of Action] to contraception, sterilization and abortion, and to undermine women's rights both as individuals and as members and heads of households," read a statement signed by all the participants. This was issued one day after the representative of the Roman Catholic Church attacked the draft Programme as lacking "a coherent moral vision".

The first speaker was Dr. Pamela Maraldo, president of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. She stated that the inability to control their lives shackles women to a lesser status than men; there can be no advancement in the world if the status of women is not improved.

Mona Zulficar, of the Women's Health Improvement Centre in Cairo,0. reported on a January 1994 meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in which 227 women from 79 countries adopted a strong statement on reproductive rights.

Women in Bangladesh must struggle not only against a deprived economy and cultural restrictions, but also a recent rise in religious fundamentalism that has targeted women, reported Sandra Kabir, executive director of the Bangladesh Women's Health Coalition.

Frances Kissling, president of Catholics For a Free Choice, said that

'Neither Governments nor religion can substitute for each individual woman's judgement regarding her reproductive life.'

neither Governments nor religion can substitute for each individual woman's judgement regarding her reproductive life. "Culture" cannot justify discrimination against women, she emphasized.

Sonia Correa, representing the Brazilian NGO IBASE, said that despite the separation of state and church in Brazil, the Roman Catholic Church

Continued on page 8

News From the NGOs

How to ensure media coverage of population issues was the focus of a three-day national workshop in New Delhi, organized in February by Women's Feature Service. Some 22 journalists and others took part.

"The media, when it addresses the issue of population, focuses on the differing perspectives of North and South," commented Anita Anand, director of Women's Feature Service. "The substantive issues have, unfortunately, never received the focus and space they deserve."

To provide participants with a better understanding of the issues, medical professionals and development experts delivered a series of issue briefings on family planning counselling and health services, abortion, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, migration, reproductive health technologies, and population from a women's health perspective.

◆

To fully involve Turkish NGOs in ICPD, the Family Planning Association of Turkey organized a February meeting of 11 NGOs and government representatives to discuss the country's national report to ICPD and make recommendations regarding the Conference Programme of Action.

Participants agreed to continue working as a permanent NGO committee to deal with ICPD preparatory activities and follow-up.

◆

Enda Third World (Environment and Development in the Third World), a Paris-based NGO, plans to produce a daily French-language newspaper, *Vivre autrement*, in Cairo during ICPD. The paper will provide a platform for Southern NGOs to exchange information. Enda Third World published similar papers during the 1992 Earth Summit and last year's World Conference on Human Rights.

NGO Women

Continued from page 7

asserts a strong influence on the governmental decision-making process in matters of reproductive health.

In Nigeria, one consequence of the lack of reproductive health information and services is the widespread occurrence of vesico vaginal fistula, a disabling condition linked to early child bearing, explained Rakiya Sani Ahmed, leader of a campaign on this issue in the predominantly Muslim state of Kano.

In Romania — as in other Eastern European countries — women use abortion as a means of family planning because they lack family planning services or information, reported Irina Dinca, founder of the Youth-for-Youth Foundation which provides sex education for adolescents. She told of girls as young as 14 resorting to abortion.

Maria Consuelo Mejia, representing Mexico's Information Group on Reproductive Choice, made a strong appeal for respecting cultural diversity and human rights. No group has the right to impose its views on the world and to monopolize ethics, she said.

Luz Alvarez Martinez, co-founder and director of the National Latina Health Organization in the United States, told of her feelings when, after giving birth to twins, her Roman Catholic priest told her she must not practise family planning.

Finally, Margaret Thuo, programme director of the Family Planning Association of Kenya, said that no one has the right to force women to have children or not to have children, to tell women what family planning method they should use, or to withhold information on choices.

1994 Calendar of Upcoming Events

July United Nations Headquarters, New York	Substantive session of the United Nations Economic and Social Council.
3-4 September Cairo, Egypt	Pre-Conference intergovernmental consultations.
5-13 September **Cairo, Egypt**	**International Conference on Population and Development, 1994.**
Mid-September-mid-December United Nations Headquarters, New York	49th session of the United Nations General Assembly. Consideration of the Report of the International Conference on Population and Development.

International Conference on Population and Development

ICPD '94

ICPD 94 is the monthly newsletter of the International Conference on Population and Development. For further information please contact:

ICPD Secretariat
220 E. 42nd Street, 22nd floor
New York, N.Y. 10017, USA
Tel: (212) 297-5244/5245
Fax: (212) 297-5250
E-mail: ryanw@unfpa.org

Printed on recycled paper